

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 10488

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TAGS: CG, BE, PFOR

SUBJ: BELGIAN-ZAIRIAN MIXED COMMISSION RESUMES

REF: KINSHASA 9871

SUMMARY: MINISTER COUNSELOR RAULIER, BELGIAN EMBASSY, CONFIRMS REPORTS THAT BELGIAN-ZAIRIAN MIXED COMMISSION HAS RESUMED WORK. THIS DEVELOPMENT IS RESULT LUBURTON INITIATIVE WHICH LED TO NGUZA'S TRIP TO BRUSSELS AND HIS MEETINGS WITH PRIMIN AND FONMIN. CURRENTLY, MIXED COMMISSION IS DISCUSSING BELGIAN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ZAIRE FOR 1975. COMPENSATION FOR BELGIAN ASSISTANCE WHICH HAVE BEEN ZIRIANIZED WILL BE ADDRESSED LATER. END SUMMARY.

1. RAULIER TOLD DCM DECEMBER 10 THAT MIXED COMMISSION HAD INDEED RESUMED WORK. AN INITIAL PLENARY SESSION ATTENDED BY FONMIN UMBA DI LUTETE AND MABASSADOR KERRAMANS OCCURRED ON EVE OF MOBUTU'S DEPARTURE FOR ASIA. THIS HAD BEEN FOLLOWED BY A FURTHER MEETING DECEMBER 9 DURING WHICH ACTING FONMIN BOLELA AND BELGIAN CHARGE HEADED THEIR RESPECTIVE DELEGATIONS. FURTHER MEETING HAD TAKEN PLACE DECEMBER 10 AT "TECHNICAL LEVEL" WITH ZAIRIAN SIDE REPRESENTED BY KUTENDIKANA, HEAD OF COOPERATION DIVISION
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IN DEPTFONAFF.

3. ALTHOUGH RAULIER SOMEWHAT EVASIVE, WE HAVE IMPRESSION MIXED COMMISSION IS CURRENTLY DISCUSSING SIZE AND CONTENT OF BELGIAN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO ZAIRE IN 1975. RAULIER AT ONE STAGE REMARKED THAT DISCUSSIONS WERE PROGRESSING QUITE RAPIDLY WHICH INDICATED GOZ WISHED TO HAVE A PROGRAM ABOUT THE SAME SIZE AND KIND AS 1974'S. THIS WAS A PLEASANT SURPRISE SINCE MOBUTU HAD PUBLICLY CRITICIZED BELGIAN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AS BEING MAINLY TO BELGIUM'S ADVANTAGE.

4. WHEN ASKED ABOUT COMPENSATION, RAULIER SAID BOTH SIDES AGREED THIS WAS ESSENTIALLY A POLITICAL QUESTION WHICH COULD ONLY BE DECIDED AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL. WHEN PRESSED, RAULIER INDICATED THAT SOME PREPARATORY DISCUSSIONS OF THE SUBJECT AT THE TECHNICAL LEVEL WOULD ALSO BE HELD. ONE PROBLEM FOR THE BELGIAN SIDE WAS THAT MANY FORMER OWNERS HAD MADE PRIVATE ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE NEW ZAIRIAN OWNERS ABOUT WHICH THEY WERE RELUCTANT TO INFORM BELGIAN AUTHORITIES.

5. RAULIER ACKNOWLEDGED THAT FULL RESUMPTION OF OFFICIAL CONTACTS RESULTED FROM LEBURTON'S RECENT TRIP TO ZAIRE. HE STATED IDEA OF TRIP HAD BEEN PROMOTED BY DAVISTER, (EDITOR OF SPECIAL). IT HAD BEEN PAINFUL FOR AMBASSADOR KERREMANS AND HIS STAFF TO ATTEND LAVISH DINNER IN LEBURTON'S HONOR HOSTED BY MOBUTU AT WHICH SENIOR MEMBERS OF GOZ PRESENT. EVEN MORE PAINFUL WAS LEBURTON'S PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT GOZ AGREED MIXED COMMISSION WOULD RESUME WORK WHICH ENABLED MOBUTU TO DEPICT GOB AS PENITENT DEMANDEUR. HOWEVER, LEBURTON TRIP RESULTED IN INVITATION TO DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL BUREAU NGUZA TO ATTEND SOCIALIST CONGRESS AND HAD GIVEN GOB OPPORTUNITY TO ARRANGE MEETINGS WITH PRIMIN, FONMIN AND OTHERS REPORTED BY EMBASSY BRUSSELS. WHEN AMBASSADOR KERREMANS MET NGUZA AT AIRPORT UPON HIS RETURN FROM BRUSSELS, NGUZA STATED THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WERE NOW COMPLETELY NORMAL. RAULIER COMMENTED THAT ALL GOZ DOORS NOW OPEN TO MEMBERS OF HIS EMBASSY.

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6. COMMENT: ABOVE CONFIRMS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED IMPRESSION THAT BELGIAN-ZAIRIAN RELATIONS HAVE BEEN IMPROVING STEADILY. SOME OF THE HEAT MAY BE TAKEN OUT OF THE COMPENSATION ISSUE IF MANY OF THE BELGIANS WHO HAVE BEEN EXPROPRIATED HAVE, IN FACT, MADE PRIVATE ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE NEW ZAIRIAN OWNERS. WE SUSPECT THAT ZAIRIAN AUTHORITIES, NO LESS THAN BELGIAN, ARE LARGELY IN THE DARK CONCERNING THE DETAILS OF SUCH AGREEMENTS. DESPITE

UNHAPPINESS OF BELGIAN EMBASSY WITH LEBURTON'S PRIVATE
DIPLOMACY, IT APPEARS THAT LEBURTON DESERVES CREDIT FOR
GETTING GOB-GOZ RELATIONS OFF DEAD CENTER.
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